

Forklift Training Facts*

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*Applies to all Powered Industrial Trucks covered by WAC 296-24-230

Department of
**LABOR AND
INDUSTRIES**



Answers to the Most-often Asked Questions about Forklift Training

Learn more at: www.LNI.wa.gov/wisha/p-ts_safety/forklift.htm

Must employees be trained? **Yes!**

All employees operating a forklift must be trained. The training consists of three elements: formal (general, classroom-type) training, practical (site-specific, hands-on) training and a visual evaluation of the operator's skill.

Does training have to be documented? **Yes!**

The employer must keep a record of forklift training and the evaluation. The record includes the name of the operator, date of the training, date of evaluation and the name of the person(s) giving the training and evaluation.

Does an employer have to hire a professional trainer to give the training? **No!**

Anyone who has the knowledge, training and experience to train and evaluate forklift operators can conduct the training.

Does training from a previous employer count? **Yes! and No!**

Training received from a previous employer can meet the general, classroom-type training requirement, if such training was appropriate to the truck and working conditions encountered and if the operator was evaluated and found competent to operate the truck safely within three years. However, the current employer is still responsible for site-specific hands-on training for the specific forklift that the employee will be using. Additionally, the current employer is required to observe and evaluate the employee's ability to safely operate the forklift. Both the training and the evaluation have to be documented. *(Sample on back of this form.)*

Can an employer develop their own training program? **Yes!**

An employer can develop their own program using, for example, WISHA Codes, *Forklift Safety Guide***, videos, an owner's manual review and a hands-on training session. Additionally, the trainer would observe the operator and evaluate their ability to safely operate the forklift. *Topics required to be covered during training and evaluation are listed on the back of this fact sheet.*

Is a license or certification required to operate a forklift? **No!**

There is no license or "certification" requirement for forklift operators. The requirement is that the operator receives the following training:

- General forklift operation and safety information *(topics listed on the back of this form)*
 - Workplace specific training, including a hands-on demonstration on the type of forklift the operator will actually be using *(topics listed on the back of this form)*
 - An evaluation of the operator's skill and ability to operate the forklift safely
- And remember to document the training!

Does the employee have to be evaluated after being trained? **Yes!**

After completing the classroom training and the hands-on training, the employee must demonstrate the skills learned. An evaluator designated by the employer must visually evaluate these skills.

Additionally, all employees must be evaluated every three years to ensure that they are still operating the forklifts in a safe manner.

A training program covering the general forklift information is available on the L&I

Web site at:

www.LNI.wa.gov/wisha/cbt/courses.htm

Contact Consultation Services for further information:

Everett	425-290-1431
Bellevue	425-990-1462
Tacoma	253-596-3917
Tumwater	360-902-5472
E. Wenatchee	509-886-6570
Spokane	509-324-2543

These topics must be covered when training or evaluating a forklift operator.

Employers may use this checklist to document that employees have been trained and/or evaluated in all the topics listed below.

General Forklift Topics:		Workplace-Specific Topics:	
	Operating instructions, warnings and precautions for types of industrial truck the operator will be authorized to operate.		Surface conditions where the vehicle will be operated.
	Differences between the forklift and an automobile.		Composition of loads to be carried and load stability.
	Vehicle controls and instrumentation: Where they are located, what they do and how they work.		Load manipulation, stacking and unshackling.
	Engine or motor operation.		Pedestrian traffic where the vehicle will be operated.
	Steering and maneuvering.		Narrow aisles and other restricted places where the vehicle will be operated.
	Visibility (including restrictions due to loading).		Hazardous (classified) locations where the vehicle will be operated.
	Fork and attachment adaptation, operation and use limitations.		Ramps and other sloped surfaces that could affect the vehicle's stability.
	Vehicle capacity.		Closed environments and other areas where insufficient ventilation or poor vehicle maintenance could cause a buildup of carbon monoxide or diesel exhaust.
	Vehicle stability.		Other unique or potentially hazardous environmental conditions in the workplace that could affect safe operation.
	Vehicle inspection and maintenance that the operator will be required to perform.		Hands-on demonstration using the type of vehicle that the operator will actually be using.
	Refueling and/or charging and recharging of batteries.		Changes in workplace conditions that could affect safe operation (such as: new trenches, new worker access routes or new staging areas on construction sites).
	Operating limitations.		
	Other operating instructions, warnings or precautions listed in the operator's manual for the types of vehicle that the employee is being trained on.		

Name of Operator: _____

Date of Formal Training: _____ Name of Trainer: _____

Date of Practical Training: _____ Name of Trainer: _____

Date of Evaluation: _____ Name of Evaluator: _____